## COT Security Alert – Phishing Email Reminder

Recently, COT has seen an increase in phishing emails, and employees have responded with their user ID and password.  When this happens, the responders account is almost automatically compromised and used to send very high volumes of spam and phishing emails.  Not only is this a heavy strain on the email servers, but many private sector email providers block incoming email from any ky.gov address when they repeatedly receive spam or phishing emails from them.  They may also place ky.gov on an independent blacklist that is shared with other email providers.  When ky.gov email addresses are blacklisted, outbound email to legitimate business partners and citizens is often sent back as undeliverable and <u>state business is adversely affected</u>.  State email administrators have no control over what is placed on the independent blacklists, when or if it is removed, or email that is blocked by private companies and email providers.

All phishing emails share one revealing characteristic: they are after information that should **never** be disclosed through email, either by a reply or by following a link.  **Revealing a user ID and password to someone on the other end of an unexpected email is the same as giving your address and house key to a stranger on the street.**  Even if an email appears to be from someone familiar, it may not be, and users should remember that it is against Enterprise policy to share passwords.

Please review the Enterprise User ID and Password Policy for more information: [CIO-072 -- User ID and Password Policy.](#)

**Please forward to all end users who have ky.gov email.**

NOTICE: COT is providing this information so that you are aware of the latest security threats, vulnerabilities, software patches, etc. You should consult with your network administrator or other technical resources to ensure that the appropriate actions for these alerts are followed. If you are a network administrator and need additional information, please call the Help Desk at 502.564.7576.

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